

April 25, 2016

Martinsville City Council toured the Southside area on April 25, 2016 beginning at 5:00pm. Those present for the tour were Council Member Teague, Mayor Turner, and Council Member Hodge. Vice Mayor Bowles and Council Member Stroud were absent from the tour. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Property Maintenance Deputy Fire Marshall Andy Powers, Property Maintenance Inspector Mark Price, Assistant City Manager Wayne Knox, Fire Chief Ted Anderson, and Officer Coretha Gravely. Mickie Powell of the Martinsville Bulletin was also present for the tour.

The Southside Neighborhood Meeting was held at Fuller Memorial Church, 1204 Askin Street, Martinsville, VA at 7:30 PM, with Mayor Danny Turner presiding and Council Members present including: Council Member Teague and Council Member Hodge. Staff present: City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Assistant City Manager Wayne Knox, City Attorney Eric Monday, Police Chief Sean Dunn, Police Captain Rob Fincher, Officer Coretha Gravely, Inspector Andy Powers, Inspector Mark Price, and Fire Chief Ted Anderson.

Mayor Turner called the meeting to order.

Officer Gravely thanked everyone for attending and invited Pastor Fred Hardin to offer a prayer.

Andy Powers summarized the neighborhood tour, describing 101 Sellers Street emergency order for demolition, water tanks on Bethel Lane that are being removed and provided an update on the property nuisance report. Powers introduced Mark Price and invited those in attendance to talk to him after the meeting. He detailed Forest Street issues, sewer line work, and posted notices on Southside. City Manager Towarnicki said that installation of new meters would begin within two months.

Officer Gravely introduced Donna Byrd, thanking her for all of her contributions to the church and the neighborhood. Mayor Turner said it's important in a community when the citizens go above and beyond to show they care.

Annie Martin, 1005 Paul Street complained about property at 1006 Paul Street, stating no one is taking care of it & asked that the inspector take a look at it.

Richard Toler, Forest Street asked what was being done about speeding on Forest Street and acknowledged additional patrol.

Joel Mitchell, neighborhood block captain on Forest Street also expressed concern of speeding, no stop sign at Princeton and Forest and no traffic signal at Market and Moss Street.

Sonny Farmer, 705 Pace Street voiced concern about speeding and asked why residential streets are 30mph and asked if the speed limit could be lowered and enforced. Mayor Turner asked City Attorney Monday about the state requirements, Monday explained the City could set the limit at whatever they want.

Linda Lawry, Graves Street thanked the Police Department for their work on Graves Street and expressed concern about the guardrail being removed for loggers at Stone Dynamics.

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Wilhelmina Roberts, 1010 Paul Street expressed concern about speeders on Paul Street. She said traffic coming off of Paul Street does not stop. She said the street is not being kept clean and she says there is a house in the area that homeless people are using.

Mayor Turner stated that at the last meeting there was concern of 4-wheelers making noise at all hours and asked Chief Dunn if that had been resolved. Residents said this was still a problem.

Dale Handy, Graves Street complained about a drone that a neighbor brings out late at night and possible privacy invasion. City Attorney Monday said there are no local regulations on drone operation but the owner does need to register the drone with the department of aviation, stating he will follow up on those regulations.

Toler said he had seen a resident with a green laser pointed in the sky.

Mitchell said off Market Street towards the Police Department needs a stop light installed to prevent future accidents.

Handy complained about debris at back of Stone Dynamics property being an eye sore. Monday said the City would follow up on the debris that is being dumped.

Resident stated at the back of her residence there are discarded cars. Powers confirmed that residents cannot park uninsured, untagged vehicles in the city and he will follow up.

Martin asked if there are any activities provided for the youth through the summer. Mitchell and Toler expressed interest and concern on this as well. Towarnicki said there are activities offered through the YMCA and other organizations but the City sometimes has difficulty keeping the children involved and participating. Residents expressed concern on youth and the education they are receiving and the activities to keep them out of trouble. They feel there should be grants or other resources to fund activities for the youth. Teague said the YMCA does have activities for families that cannot afford a membership. Towarnicki said that the Parks and Recreation department is still very active but over the past decade, the participation has dropped to the point that some activities are cancelled due to participation. Turner said that maybe the City should reassess programs available to the local youth. Officer Gravely shared several programs that she has worked with for the youth also. Melanie Soulos, 513 Forest Street also commented on programs offered by the Library for area youth.

There being no further business, Council Member Hodge made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25pm, Council Member Teague seconded the motion, all Council Members voted in favor.

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Karen Roberts  
Clerk of Council

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Danny Turner  
Mayor